May, 2020 Volume 44, Issue 5

The LongPath

A North Alabama DX Club Publication

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From the President

After one more COVID month, I'm anxious to go out and meet people. Again can't do it. More time for the radio, I hope. So we'll have a virtual meeting again in May. This time, May 12 at 7pm on the 147.30 repeater. But for a change, we'll add the Zoom multicast software. We are the technology leaders, of course. So we can all see each other, and then see AC4G do his presentation live. Of course, the presentation will also be in pdf on the NADXC website. There are several advantages to using Zoom. You can watch the presenter live and follow his mouse. You don't have to worry about RF coverage of the repeater. And you can talk duplex without worrying about interference on the repeater.

I've been hearing a lot about Elmer activity lately, and I've been wondering what to do about it. Again I need your help with feedback on what the DX Club should do. I get very little feedback on things like this, but my attention will go in the direction of the feedback that I do get. I asked several members over the past month about what they'd like to achieve in the near term. You'll see their responses in the Long Path. I thank each of you that responded. How can I help you be successful?

I see from comments I've gotten that achieving DXCC at the ARRL is a big deal throughout our membership. Steve, KY4G, updates the DXCC scores for the NADXC regularly. You can check your score here: https://www.nadxc.org/dxcc-standings/

I see there are very many members whose call signs are not here. We are a DX Club, of course. I know how difficult it is to achieve, and I know how easy it is as well. I have in my mind that I should mount a major effort to get every member onto that list. I need your feedback, especially if your name isn't on that list.

I believe I've spoken to every member who attends meetings, and don't know of anyone who does not have a good radio. The DXCC solution for all would be 1) an ok antenna such as a dipole, and 2) an understanding of how to do it -- even now while at the bottom of the solar cycle.

I've had several discussions recently on what an Elmer does. Now, I've repaired hundreds of ham radios. I can't stop it. I've gotten good at it. I get calls all the time. But an Elmer is not a free repair service; but rather a teacher. If I am asked to repair a radio, I usually volunteer to show the person HOW to repair the radio. That's going to take effort and application on the part of the student.

In the same way, I can offer NADXC presen-

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The Magic of South-west Morning Propagation

May Program by Bruce Smith, AC4G

We're all used to seeing propagation move across the country on domestic contests like Field Day, and we're aware of "good paths", like JA in the morning on 40m, or EU on 20m as soon as it opens. Bruce's very interesting program deals with propagation to the SW and SSW. After a brief business meeting, hear this presentation beginning around 7:30 pm.

How to Join

** Come to a club meeting;*

** or send in an application by mail (form on www.NADXC.org)*

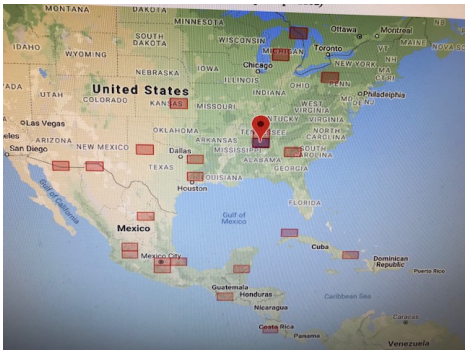
Retirement and COVID Project Update

By Steve Werner, AG4W

Last month I told you about some of my projects and the contests that have kept me busy since we started social distancing and this is an update. This month I received the plaque to the right from winning the 2019 CQ WW RTTY Contest for single operator high power in the US. I always thank the sponsor of the plaque if I am fortunate enough to win one.

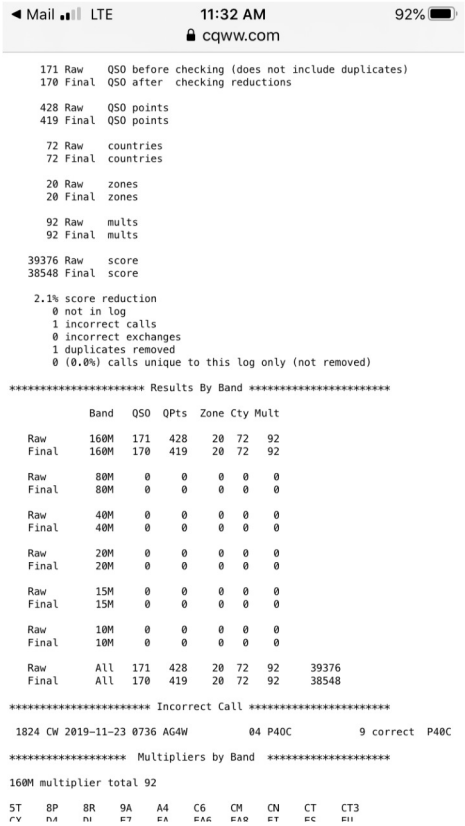
On April 13-15 we had a very unusual E skip opening on 6 meters. We normally see nice E skip in June through August and I have always had good luck around the 4th of July weekend. I

worked 24 new grid squares on those 3 days. From the map you can see we had a nice opening to the south and west by the grid squares I worked. I even got to work Chile. I think because more people are home we will see more unusual openings. That is one way to make good use of social distancing.



If you don't have an antenna up for 6 meters now is the time to put one up. Many E skip openings can be good and FT8 has made them even better. It is a great way to add to your DXCC Challenge total and the antennas are not big. A small yagi or quad can be put on a mast with a TV rotor. Most of the HF rigs built in the last 15 years have 6 meters so I encourage you to give it a try. They don't call 6 meters the magic band for nothing. Every year I get an opening into Europe in July and I use low power and a 4 element quad.

I just got my log check results for the 2019 CQ WW CW contest. I ran single operator 1.8 MHz high power assisted. Last month I wrote about the importance of logging accuracy. The average score reduction in this contest was 13.5 percent. I was pleased mine was 2.1 percent. My error was I logged P40C as P4OC. I think it is important to look at your errors and learn from them. My only error was a keyboard entry problem. This is surprising since I only worked 160 Meters which is prone to errors due to noise. I did have the advantage of running assisted. I also pay close attention to the errors the other station I work have. You can see the letters in your call others have trouble copying.



◀ Mail LTE 11:32 AM 92%

cqww.com

```
   171 Raw    QSO before checking (does not include duplicates)
   170 Final  QSO after  checking reductions

   428 Raw    QSO points
   419 Final  QSO points

    72 Raw    countries
    72 Final  countries

    20 Raw    zones
    20 Final  zones

    92 Raw    mults
    92 Final  mults

 39376 Raw    score
 38548 Final  score

  2.1% score reduction
     0 not in log
     1 incorrect calls
     0 incorrect exchanges
     1 duplicates removed
     0 (0.0%) calls unique to this log only (not removed)

********************** Results By Band **********************

            Band   QSO  QPts  Zone Cty Mult

  Raw       160M   171   428    20  72   92
  Final     160M   170   419    20  72   92

  Raw        80M     0     0     0   0    0
  Final      80M     0     0     0   0    0

  Raw        40M     0     0     0   0    0
  Final      40M     0     0     0   0    0

  Raw        20M     0     0     0   0    0
  Final      20M     0     0     0   0    0

  Raw        15M     0     0     0   0    0
  Final      15M     0     0     0   0    0

  Raw        10M     0     0     0   0    0
  Final      10M     0     0     0   0    0

  Raw        All   171   428    20  72   92     39376
  Final      All   170   419    20  72   92     38548

********************** Incorrect Call **********************

 1824 CW 2019-11-23 0736 AG4W          04 P40C           9 correct  P40C

******************  Multipliers by Band  *******************

160M multiplier total 92

5T    8P    8R    9A    A4    C6    CM    CN    CT    CT3
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This month I decided to package my QCX CW Transceiver from QRP Labs. I had to extend the controls and switches off the board to mount it in the enclosure. The enclosure I picked was originally intended for another project.

Cont'd on p. 3

From the President

(continued from p. 1)

tations on ARRL DXCC applications, how to take advantage of propagation, digital modes, how to work DX contests, or any of a multitude of methods to get to 100 countries in the shortest possible time. Remember, attaining DXCC is an achievement. You have to make up your mind and do something.

If I'm off course here, remember that I only respond to the inputs I get. Make yours one of them.

I hope to actually SEE all of you on Zoom on Tuesday. For all that check in on Zoom, I'll save you the trouble of also checking in on the repeater, and so hurry up the process. I'll open up the Zoom session at 6:30pm, a half hour before the meeting formally starts, so we can work out any wrinkles in advance. Look for an email from me Sunday or Monday with details for joining the Zoom session.

73,

Bob, K8KI

(continued from p. 2)

It is always challenging to cut a square opening in a metal enclosure such as the one needed for the display. I use a Dremel with a cutting wheel and more filing than I like to do. This QRP rig runs

5 watts on 20 meters. It is a kit that only costs $49 dollars and has a lot of interesting features. It has a synthesized VFO for tuning that uses an SI5351A with a rotary encoder. This chip gives the designer a lot of flexibility. This little radio can even run split VFOs or RIT. There is a provision to use an optional GPS module to provide frequency and time discipline, as well as maidenhead locator that can be encod-

ed into a WSPR message. The QLG1 GPS module is $23. I started out using one of these for my IC-9700 as a GPS disciplined oscillator but moved to a $125 Chinese GPS discipline oscillator

with an oven compensated crystal oscillator. It will give you a 10MHz standard that is accurate to .005 Hz within 5 hours and ultimately .00025 Hz.

The QCX rig has a Class E power amplifier. I purchased this kit to better understand Class E. I still do not believe this operates class E. I did improve the efficiency of the power amplifier by winding the toroids with Litz wire. Litz wire is normally used at low frequencies to reduce skin effect by having many very thin wire strands individually insulated and twisted together.

The blue backlight LCD display can show frequency and it also can display the results of the CW decoder. The receiver has a 200Hz filter. It also has an iambic keyer with sidetone. The radio is controlled by an ATmega328P microcontroller. It includes firmware to help you with alignment. The built in test equipment includes a voltage meter, RF power meter, audio channel amplitude AC voltage meter, frequency counter and signal generator. If you have not already ordered one of these kits for your favorite band from 80 to 17 meters you're missing out on some fun.

Last month I told you I started the conversion of my 2 Meter EME 2X13 yagis from vertical to horizontal polarization. This involved using two doubled up 1/8 inch fiberglass tubes for the boom so the yagi doesn't see the metal boom when operating horizontally. On disassembly I noted that the 75 Ohm matching feed lines going to the yagis had melted to the boom of the yagi. I

have found several different ratings for RG-11 operating on 2 meters. It amazes me manufacturers rated it from 230 to 1100 watts. Well I know 800 watts was too much. I have run it several times at 1000 watts. JT65B runs for a minute key down so it is a real stress test. I decided to upgrade the system and I purchased a power splitter from

Innov Antennas in the UK. I used their design to build the loop fed array so I was happy to give them some business. It is rated for 2KW continuous and would allow me to use 50 Ohm cable to interface with the antennas. It bought Messi and Paoloni Hyperflex

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Retirement and COVID Project Update

(continued from p. 3)

10. This is the same size as LMR-400 but performs better. At 2 meters it is rated for 1460 watts. I also used some PEX water pipe as a spacer between the coax and the boom.

I had a lot of trouble resonating the antennas again horizontally. My MFJ-259B antenna analyzer was giving me a different answer than the NanoVNA. I was lucky to have Warren bring over his Rig Expert AA-230. It turned out the MFJ was right, but it is much harder to get all the information you need. The Rig Expert will draw you a SWR curve. By having Bob, Warren and I to work on it we made great progress and got the SWR down to near 1.1:1. The Smith chart shows the wide range of SWR below 1.5:1. I have also included the progression of improvement of the SWR graphs. This is the third time I've used the Rig Expert Analyzers and the software that goes with them is really impressive. You can also use them in sunlight. The NanoVNA is not usable in sunlight. I also had to replace a 5/16 inch bolt that went thru the aluminum tubing going to the 4X4 wood that pins

the rotor and allows little movement. It sheared off between the tube and the wood.

I know some people have really struggled with what to do with the stay at home policies that have been in place. It is really good practice for retirement. I have also planted a large garden this month that includes 3 kinds of tomatoes, 2 kinds of corn, squash, cucumbers, spinach, 2 kinds of potatoes, garlic, beans, and cantaloupe. I know some have taken up binging on NetFlix. This is neither a good COVID plan or retirement plan. I believe you must keep the body and mind active or you quickly develop problems. This is why so many have gained weight recently. I also try to go on regular long bike rides.

73,

Steve AG4W

News from Taft, TN

By Bruce Smith, AC4G

Commemorating the 2019 NADXC Picnic, below are a couple of pictures showing NADXC members and their families enjoying the fellowship and food (BBQ, fixings, and deserts) in Taft, TN at the QTH of Bruce Smith, AC4G for the annual NADXC Picnic held on October, 13, 2019. Part of the festivities included a "hay" ride touring the AC4G Century old family farm, and tours of AC4G's ham shack & antenna farm.

Alas, on the evening of Sunday May 3, AC4G's "car shed"/ picnic pavilion came crashing to the ground during strong, straight line winds in Taft, TN clocked greater than 60 -80 MPH. AC4G believes winds were closer to 90 MPH as trees were knocked down, siding blown off the house, and one of his towers was bent by the powerful force of mother nature. Bruce and his son, Zak in the midst of the horrendous dust, rain, and winds, were able to back their vehicles out from under the car shed to a safe location without receiving any damage as the structure began to lean and just seconds before crashing to the ground. Below is the resting place of the pavilion after the storms. Bruce hopes to rebuild with a stronger, larger structure having a concrete floor to facilitate more events in the future and park more, large vehicles such as Zak's backhoe, bucket

truck, and dump truck. Bruce is waiting to see what the insurance adjustor reports.

Station Comfort and Layout is Critical for Contesters and DX'ers

By Bruce Smith, AC4G

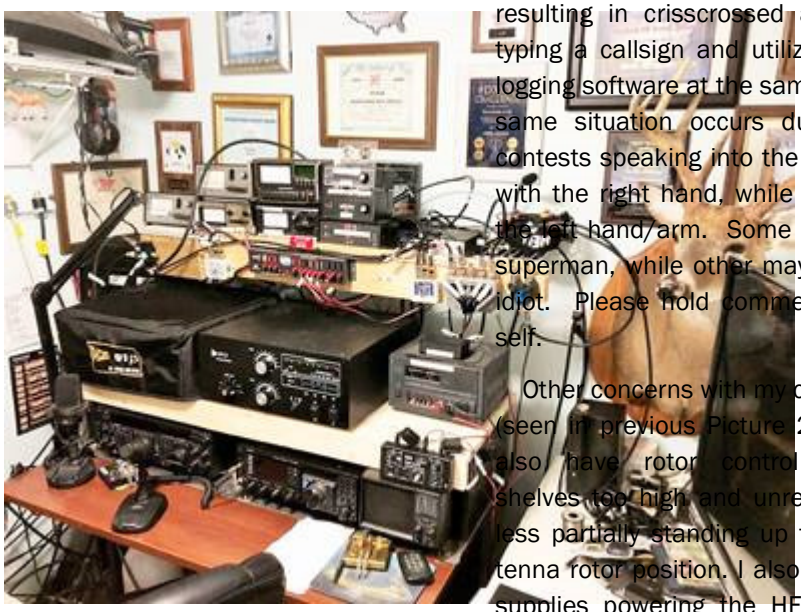
Being an "ole-man" (OM) DXer and contester for at least forty-two years, I have accumulated a lot of junk. I must admit to some degree I am a pack-rat and do not desire to get rid of many hand-me-downs. I see junk from others as treasures that I can possibly use in the future to benefit my ham station contesting & DXing capabilities. However, this mind set can have its pitfalls that we will focus in the remaining portion of this article.

The picture(s) of my current ham shack (Picture 1) explains it all, showing a lack of mobility within the shack. The challenge is determine if the shack is laid out in an efficient and comfortable manner for DXing and contesting. The obvious thought is not a chance! One might ask, "How does he even maneuver with all of that clutter?" This is a good point, how do I?

Picture 1: Junk in AC4G Ham Shack

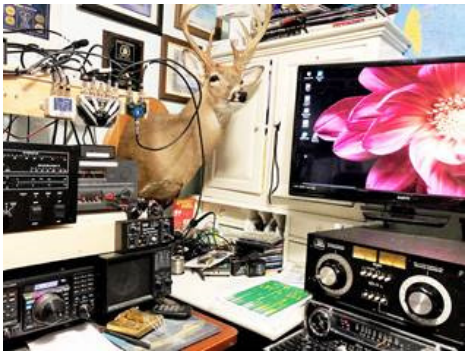
This view of my shack shows absolutely no room for additional storage or movement within the shack, not even socializing a guest visitor. Can you find the 2m transceiver under the computer monitor in the picture above? Can this station be improved? Can you see where improvements can be made? What can I do to make my ham shack better for operating especially long duration operating required for contesting? You are probably thinking that, "I hope none on the junk on the shelf falls on his head? Why does he have patch cables hanging? Do I see a gun safe in that small area? " Perhaps you have many proactive ideas to provide to me.

Below in Picture 2 is my main operating position. Perhaps there are many thing that can be done to improve the operating position. One may ask, "Why is my secondary operator a four-legged "dear? What benefit is my four-legged "dear" during a contest or working a DXpedition? Why does he have three microphones and a Heil Pro Series headset within arm's reach? How did AC4G get all of that equipment on such a small desk? Why are two (2) HF amplifiers next to each other?" These are all valid points and reasons why I need to renovate my ham shack.



Picture 2: Primary Operating Position

Recently, after a major contest perhaps the CQWW CW Contest, I realized that my score was not good enough to be a top contender. I began wondering why and what I could do to improve my scores for all future contests, state QSO parties, and general DXing. I first had to figure out some of the strengths of my shack (if any?), but most of all identify the many weaknesses regarding my ham station and ham station layout. From Picture 3, one can see a major fallacy with my station configuration with the CW key and logging computer.



Picture 3: CW Key (right hand) and Computer Logging (left hand)

The problem with this layout is that operator must send CW with their right hand, while logging with their left hand resulting in crisscrossed arms. Yes, typing a callsign and utilizing N1MM+ logging software at the same time. The same situation occurs during phone contests speaking into the microphone with the right hand, while logging with the left hand/arm. Some may call me superman, while other may call me an idiot. Please hold comments to yourself.

Other concerns with my configuration (seen in previous Picture 2) are that I also have rotor control boxes on shelves too high and unreachable unless partially standing up to move antenna rotor position. I also have power supplies powering the HF transceiver which have no business on the same level as the transceiver. Likewise, antenna switches cannot be reached with ease. Finally, the logging computer box should not be at the same level as the HF transceiver and on the right side of the transceiver as shown in Picture 3.

Can you image how long an operator can endure this position in a major contest running 48 hours? I quickly became exhausted, frustrated, and could

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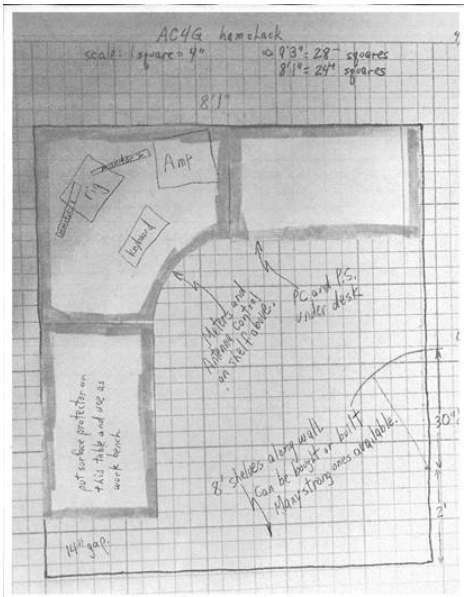
only sit at the operating position for two or three hours at most before giving it up, powering down all equipment, and turning in for the night or lasting only a few hours on a morning trying to survive these conditions and add QSOs to my contest log. Sometimes I got all tangled up in chords and my arms became tangled.

I already alluded too many problems with my existing ham shack configuration. The first major issue here is combining two (2) hobbies in one small room. I have all of my hunting supplies, boxes of ammunitions, a gun safe, and other supplies in this small area with my ham radio gear & equipment. Second, I have ham radio equipment sitting on shelves and under the desk top making it difficult to maneuver. Third, the layout of ham equipment is very inefficient. The current layout did not take into consideration comfort and efficient operating. Yes, I have seen other ham shacks on QRZ.com; in online pictures on the internet, and in different presentations throughout the years also only to find most not being configured properly. But I want to correct my stations to make it more efficient. I pondered many times how to do this. I know when setting up a contest station, much thought needs to be considered for comfort, but a close second is function by the operator.

Where could I get some ideas and expertise? Finally, after discussing my ham shack deficiencies with one of my Elmers, Bob DePierre, K8KI, we both concluded that a total renovation of the AC4G ham station was in order. We first realized that I had to remove everything out of the current shack. Secondly, I had to commit to keep other hobbies out of the ham shack in order to provide a layout conducive to serious contesting, DXing, and general operating. Third, I had to plan out a layout that makes common sense, but a layout that I wish I currently had in place making comfort a primary role in the design of a winning contest station and ham shack. I made a commitment to adhere to these simple rules.

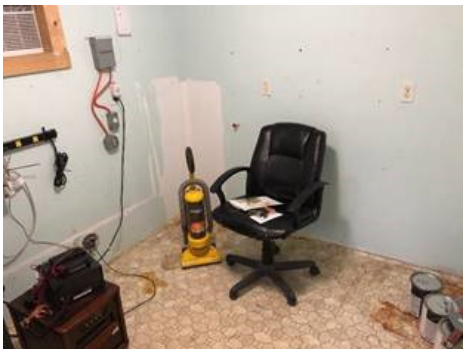
Next, with the help of Bob, K8KI, and after some discussion regarding logical placement of ham equipment, to include power supplies, rotor control boxes, antenna switches, and the computer & monitors, we converted my desires on paper to include measurements of the room and the furniture to be included in the shack. Below in Picture 4 is the simple layout to improve my operating abilities and increasing my contest scores to hopefully be a top contest contender.



Picture 4: Future AC4G Shack Configuration

After we formulated a plan, I began removing everything out of the shack. My problem was to figure out where to permanently place my hunting gear and the extra ham radio treasures collected over the years. After figuring out a home for these treasures, I was on my way to developing a first-class ham shack.

The inside of the shack shown in Picture 5 shows lots of work to be done such as relocating electrical outlets for the amplifier and basic AC components, repairing drywall, painting walls, installing a new standard 36" door, new carbon fiber flooring or hard wood floors and finally place nice looking desk/tables to hold the ham equipment. My son and I will make these renovations. Afterwards, I will install some nice cherry finished furniture. Then I can work on some shelving to be placed under the desks to hold power supplies and one or two computers. I will also be designing and building table-top shelving for antenna switches and rotor control boxes.



Picture 5: Inside Empty AC4G Shack Today

I am in the middle of this renovation/construction project (Pictures 6, 7), but have a goal to finish soon, especially since we are entering the six (6) meter season. I need some new countries for my DXCC challenge award and gaining QSOS on 6m will add to my Challenge Award totals. Unfortunately, due to the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic, many needed DXpeditions this summer 2020 to exotic countries have been cancelled, but this is allowing me to wisely execute my major renovation plan of a complete ham shack renovation makeover due to the "stay-at-home" orders directed by the President of the U.S., Leaders of other world-wide countries, and Governors of most U.S. states.

Cont'd on p. 7

Station Comfort and Layout

(cont'd from p. 6)

Picture 6: Faulty Floor Joists

Picture 7: Down to the Dirt

After completion of this renovation, I believe I will be able spend more time in a more comfortable operating position boosting my contest scores and DXCC countries. This will require the addition of a nice comfortable chair. I also hope to be able to have my computer keyboard straight in front of me making computer logging much more easier by being able to enter callsign/contest exchange information by typing on the keyboard directly in from of me and viewing the monitor off to each side of the HF transceiver. I will also be able to adjust my HF transceiver sitting directly in front of me, be able to tune my amplifier with ease, change antenna positions and turn my rotor control box, and adjust an antenna switch with ease sitting in my chair instead of having to stand up or partially stand up as I had to do before. I will be in the cockpit of a sophisticated and complex contest station. Picture 8 depicts the newly added floor joists and black plastic laid above the dirt. Termite guards have also been added. Progress continues daily.

Picture 8: New Floor Joists/Plastic/Termite Guards

The next items to be completed will be installing electrical outlets in the floor, adding a new breaker box to the outside of the shack, a new subfloor, new carbon or hardwood flooring, a new door and case, and painting the ceiling and walls.

There are many ideas and pictures on the internet that show good and bad ideas. With a common sense approach and well thought plan by executing a wish list of ideas, anyone can be a top contender in any ham radio contest or be on top of the DXpedition pile-ups. Perhaps you too should weigh the pros and cons of your ham shack. Should you step back and seriously evaluate your station? Do you have room to improve your ability to endure in contests while perhaps being a top contender in most of the major amateur radio contests and DXpeditions? Stand back, make an objective evaluation of your shack, make a realistic plan, and execute the plan even if it is only moving clutter out and rearranging equipment. I'd recommend a serious evaluation sooner than later! I am glad I took time to do it. Contesters and DX'ers beware.

VP Corner

By Steve Molo, KI4KWR

Hope everyone is doing well with the current situation we are under. Nothing much on this end has changed except the amateur radio world and new hams which is always a plus keeping me and the Store busy. Though Dayton will not be next weekend there will be a lot going on. Contest University / Online Hamfest will be happening all over, and the Hamvention Contest that Tim Duffy K3LR introduced last month.

Other than daily routine I'm working on going to V26B Contest Site in Antigua in March 2021 for the CQ WPX Contest provided COVID restrictions allow. I've begun the process to get the proper license, and hotel and airfare cost analysis. My Chat Experts are planning on building the Team up and possibly others also to make it a fun time.

Lastly.....NADXC DX Dinner is still on as planned as long as Hamfest is a go. Already working on this end on the Grand Prize so rest assured I have already been working that for us. Stay safe and see you on the airwaves.

The Casual DXer

By Kevin Hibbs, KG4TEI

Last month I was happy to report some good progress on 17M toward DXCC. This month I have continued to progress toward DXCC. I now have 51 confirmed contacts in LOTW. I have also check my logs and I have worked over 70 countries, but I have found many hams in rare locations do not use LOTW. Time to start looking into cards again.

I was down for a couple weeks after my antenna broke due to wind damage. This is the second time I have rebuilt this antenna in the last year and the thought of repairing it again doesn't thrill me because of the time involved in hanging it again. After last month's article Bob asked me what my goals for my station are in the next three years. I have given this considerable thought and my primary station goal is putting up a tower with a beam. I am now making preparations to get my tower and beam in the air. The last couple weekends I have been building saw horses and making preparations to raise the tower off the ground and restring the lifting cables. This has been a goal of mine for the last few years, but dedicating time has always been a challenge. I know my time at home is hopefully nearing its end, but it has allowed to be able to works some DX a get a small start on the tower project.I hope I can continue to keep this momentum even after the restrictions are lifted. Until next time.

73,

Kevin

Kg4TEI

In Three Years

By the LongPath Staff

A few members were asked the question "Where would you like to be with your ham radio hobby in 3 years." Here are their replies.

From Kelley Vann Johns, W4VPZ

For my station, I'm happy with my gear (TS-590S), but need to:

- properly ground it
- put up the tower sections I have*
- add a beam antenna (C3E, in pieces at Chris AI4U's house), or more

Activities I'm interested in pursuing in the next 3 years, or sooner:

- DXCC — today I am holding at 98 confirmed contacts for basic DXCC.
- learn CW well enough to use it.
- use a digital mode.
- participate in more contests — I have dabbled in the past, but never with serious contesting in mind.

* I have 6 sections (I'll use 3, maybe 4) of Rohn 25 in the yard. My hope was to put the tower up without guy lines, but seeing Bruce AC4G's guy lines on posts illustrate that they could be installed for mowing ease. This tower project is bigger than my abilities, so it is going to sit for a while.

73,

Kelley W4VPZ

From Jon Benignus, K4KLB

Initially I was asked, "What would your dream shack be like?" Wow. That's a question I never really pondered. Until now all of my shacks have been just that...SHACKS. I've been in an outdoor shed at two different locations in Mississippi and my shack in Virginia was an old 1940s chicken house turned into a workshop that was behind my QTH. I cooked to death out there in the summer and froze in the winter. I had to hang tarps on the walls because the un-insulated wooden slat construction passed more wind than Steve, KI4KWR, and myself traveling back from Dayton Hamvention after a stop at White Castle last year. With all that said, it never deterred me from loving this hobby but I never looked too far into the clouds at a dream station. Thankfully a bit of redirection came in the form of a new question. "Where would you like to be in three years?" Basically, what tasks and activities would I like to accomplish? Here we go!

My first goal to complete is to upgrade to Extra. Maybe I won't have to wait until the new question pool is released this summer due to lack of test sessions between now and then. I recently finished the beginner CW class with CWops and I have logged a few CW contacts since then. Three years should be more than ample time to earn CW DXCC and work some CW contest with proficiency. I still have a long way to go but even 1 year ago I didn't imagine I would be where I am now. All I need to do is put forth the time and effort. I have a 40 foot tower that I purchased used that until the COVID-19 situation descended upon us I was planning on having a local tech school refinish it for me. Same plan, just delayed. On top of it I have a Yaesu rotator and Cushcraft MA6B Yagi waiting in the wings. And off the side of it an inverted L for low band work is in order. With the ample amount of space I have I would like to have a switchable Beverage system up and operational. Those are the major long term projects and I think in a 3 year period it is attainable. A new shack desk is on the short list.

Cont'd on p. 9

In Three Years

(continued from p. 8)

One that isn't as tall and deep as the homemade standing crafting table I am using now. I could shorten the table legs but it's so deep that all of my gear sits in the middle of the table with a foot of clearance to the wall. Also on the short list is running of new feed lines to the exterior of the house, grounding and mounting two VHF/UHF antennas for packet and voice on the eve of the house. I guess you could say that is my "dream station" after all.

From Mick Bell, N8AU

As you know, I'm in the midst of rebuilding my Ham station and -- I hasten to add -- for the last time! When finished, it will be comprised of a 35 foot aluminum tower with a 4ft mast topped by a SteppIR Urban Beam & a Diamond 2m/440. In the shack I'll keep my Flex 6400 and replace my Elecraft K3 with a new Elecraft K4. The shack will also sport a 42 inch 4K TV which runs a Geochron and will also double for the K4. The Flex 6400 will be driven by an Expert 1.3K and the K4 by an Elecraft KPA-500 amp. The 2m/440 radio in the shack is a Yaesu FTM-400XD. Once all this falls into place, DXCC on 3 bands would be a nice goal. The Urban Beam won't be exceptional but it will provide me with much greater capabilities than the vertical I've always worked with. So while I can't say that this will be a "dream station" it will be a step up for me.

Mick (N8AU)

[Mick built some professional-looking shelves and surfaces for his rig bench. When asked how he built them, he responded: - Ed.]

I found them at Home Depot. Just cut to size, sanded & finished with tongue oil. Then glued & screwed them together.

- about 6 coats of tung oil, lightly sanded between coats
- not plywood - solid 3/4" glued together to form wide pieces - not sure what the wood is -- maybe ash
- some cuts I did myself but longer ones were done at Home Depot
- didn't bother hiding the screws
- did all the work at home
- keyboard slides out from under the counter

Space is at a premium. Room is only 15' X 8.5'

[For those of you who haven't tried what Mick did, you ought to. It is stunning! - Ed.]

NADXC DXCC Standings

By Stephen Smith, KY4G

Bob (K8KI) recently asked me to update the DXCC standings on the NADXC website. The first reason was to ensure that the information on the website is correct. A second reason is that Bob is interested in knowing who needs help in getting on the DXCC list. I have tabulated the current Mixed DXCC standings, based on a recent membership list, into the table on the next two pages.

I noted several discrepancies while updating the list and I have captured that information in the comments column. I am hoping our membership can help resolve these issues. The cells highlighted in green indicate updated DXCC counts or additions to the DXCC list based on the membership list. I found some hams that had filed for DXCC in the phone category instead of the mixed category and noted this using orange highlighting. Some silent keys, highlighted in yellow, have already disappeared off the list. I had previous data on some, but not on others. Please let me know if you happen to know their DXCC count. One of the SKs, Ray Smith, appeared to have a typo in the callsign. I was unable to resolve the correct callsign by searching QRZ.com. Two hams, highlighted in red, were already on the NADXC DXCC list, but were not on the membership role. Finally, I don't believe ARRL resets the DXCC records upon issuance of a vanity callsign to another ham. I believe I found one instance of this, highlighted in blue, but there may be others. If you find other inaccuracies in the list or if I've left someone off, please respond and kindly let me know so that I can update the website.

Thanks and 73,

Stephen Smith, KY4G

Cont'd on p. 10

NADXC DXCC Statings

(continued from p. 9)

Callsign	Mixed DXCC	Last Name	First Name	Comments
N4KG (SK)	370	Russell	Tom	Was not on list, but I had data
W4ABW	370	Watson	Alfred	
K0BS	368	Schartau	Butch	
N4NO	367	Cross	Jerome	
K4XR	357	Compton	Craig	
WA4OEJ	355	Vatz	Bernard	
K4ADK	354	Maples	Mike	
K4NA	353	Bickley	Lyle	
KR4F	352	Winter	Johnny	
K1KOB	350	King	Ralph	
AC4G	349	Smith	Bruce	
W4BRE (SK)	348	Whitsett	Dan	
AJ6T	346	Miller	Walter	
N5DF	346	Stensby	John	
NF4A	346	Wooten	Charlie	
AG4W	343	Werner	Steve	
N4NM	338	Lewis	Chuck	
AI4U	304	Reed	Chris	May be total from previous callsign holder?
N4UC	304	Davis	Art	
K8KI	301	DePierre	Bob	
KG4CUY	300	Duncan	Tom	
N4KH	300	Spikes, Jr	Jim	
W4WB	300	Johnson	Barry	
K4XQ	283	Gasaway	Jim	
K4KSV	266	Shealy	David	
KF3FRK	263	Kepner	Fred	
KS4L	231	Moore	Randy	
K4TTZ	228	Reed	Wayne	
NK3V	221	Clifford	Jim	
NN4NT	201	Suggs	Robert	
N4BCD	189	Brown	Mark	phone
KY4G	150	Smith	Stephen	
WL7C	148	Fry	Ghee	
KQ4VT	146	Cassidy	Jared	
KI4KWR	136	Molo	Steve	
KD8IGK	126	Bathgate	Bill	Not on membership role, but on DXCC list
AK4PR	124	Durrett	Rodney	
WA4DXP	124	Smith	MD	
W4VM	105	Shaffer	Ron	phone
AI4QR	104	Conklin	Steve	
W9SGM	104	Suckow	Gary	
KN4OK	102	Guthrie	David	Not on membership role, but on DXCC list
K4RHB	100	Burns	Bob	
WG8S	100	Hensley	Kim	
AB4B		Wininger	Tim	
ABJ4I (SK)		Smith	Ray	? Please double check callsign
AE4ED		Massey	Fred	
AF7KE		Morgan	Mark	
AI4VV		Seaford	Susan	
K4KLB		Benignus	Jon	

Cont'd on p. 11

NADXC DXCC Standings

(continued from p. 10)

Callsign	Mixed DXCC	Last Name	First Name	Comments
K4MMW		Alford	Warren	
K4SAV		Montgomery	Harvey	
KB0DLS		Bell	Sandra	
KC4RPD		Watson	Evelyn	
KC4TNC		Friend	Robert	
KD2JSW		Vibbert	Steve	
KD2KAG		Vibbert	Anita	
KD4IYD		Rheinhart	Craig	
KE4ROC		Myszka, Jr.	Edward	
KF4BOG		Werner	Michael	
KF4LFQ		Sperr	Robby	
KG4ATU		Gibbs	Steven	
KG4TEI		Hibbs	Kevin	
KG7NJQ		Morgan	Jean	
KI4NCL		Hibbs	Terri	
KI4WLX		Duncan	Janet	
KJ4OKJ		Stephenson	David	
KK4OVW		Ruemler	Randy	
KK4TIL		Prevost	Drew	
KM4BGF		Gold	Billy	
KN4JJA		Beckling	Jessica	
KN4OKX		Abshire	Adrian	
KN4OOP		Abshire	Karen	
KS3P		Cole	Kaitlyn	
KY4TT		Large	Tim	
N2NLY		Conklin	Jason	
N4HIX		Winter	Melanie	
N4WGY		Conklin	Robert	
N8AU		Bell	Gerald (Micky)	
NM4T (SK)		Behrens	Craig	Not listed in document, no data
NS4Q		Morphew	Larry	
NX3P		Cole	Stanley	
W4ASA		Hatton	Herbert	
W4KTX		Graves	Howard	
W4MRP		Prevost	Mike	
W4VPZ		Johns	Kelley	
W5WQQ		Hemby	Jack	

The LongPath Staff

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Chris Reed, AI4U, Minutes

Bob De Pierre, K8KI, From the President

Steve Molo, KI4KWR, VP Corner

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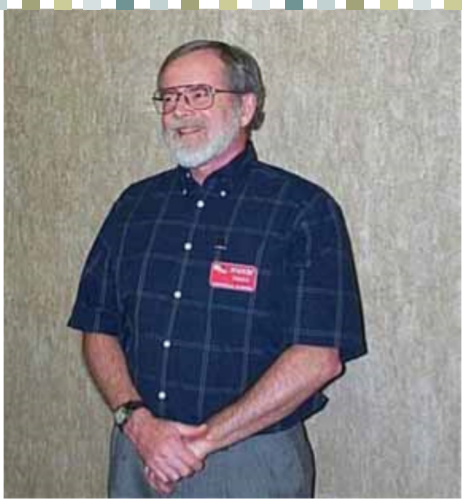
DX Contests for May

By Chuck Lewis, N4NM



CQ-M Intl. DX Contest (CW & SSB), 160-10M

May 9, 1200Z to May 10, 1159Z

Exchange: RS(T) plus Serial #

See page 69, May QST and WWW.SRR.RU/EN-RULES

Volta WW RTTY DX Contest, 80-10M

May 9, 1200Z to May 10, 1200Z

Exchange: RST, plus S/N, and CQ zone

See page 69, May QST and www. contestvolta.com

His Majesty King of Spain Contest, (CW), 160 – 10M

May 16, 1200Z to May 17, 1200Z

Exchange: RS(T) plus Serial # or EA Province

See page 69, May QST and www.concusos.ure.es/en

UN DX Contest (CW & SSB), 80-10M

May 16, 0600Z to 2100Z

Exchange: RS(T) plus serial or Kazakhstan district code

See page 69, May QST or www.undxc.kz/bez-rubriki

CQ WPX CW Contest (CW), 160-10M

May. 30, 0000Z to May 31, 2359Z

Exchange: RST plus serial #

See page 69, May QST or www.cqwpx.com/rules.htm

Dates & times often change or are misprinted in the journals; beware.

Chuck, N4NM

April Meeting Minutes

By Chris Reed, AI4U

Bob K8KI called the virtual meeting of the North Alabama DX Club to order on the 147.300 repeater on Tuesday April 14, 2020 at 7pm. Twenty three checkins were logged by Bob. Bob made a few short announcements including that the Brick had been purchased from the ARRL in honor of SK Craig Behrens, NM4T. Mark, N4BCD updated everyone on the hamfest for August. As of the meeting, the Huntsville Hamfest was still a go. The meeting was adjourned and Bob, K8KI presented the program entitled "Wattmeters: A Historical Perspective" over the air utilizing slides posted to the nadxc.org website. Following the program, the repeater was returned to normal operation. The next scheduled virtual meeting is scheduled for 7 p.m. Tuesday, May 12th on the 147.300 repeater and Zoom. Information will be sent prior to the meeting.

Treasurer's Report

By Chris Reed, AI4U

There were no financial transactions for April.

Balance	$8,989.68

There are a few paypal entries outstanding for membership. The club owes reimbursement of $221 and change for memorial brick for Craig, NM4T.